

Three Little Kittens

A Story for Little Tots

By UNCLE MILTON



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ONE morning Mrs. Tabby Cat called her three little children, *Mouser*, *Touser* and *Pussy*, and said: "Mamma will be very busy to-day, as she must make a Milk pudding and some Mouse pie for to-morrow's dinner, because Aunt Kittie is coming to visit us, so you must be good children and go to school. After school you can play until supper time; but be careful and do not get into trouble or mischief. When you come home, if you have been good little kittens, I will give each of you a piece of Mouse pie. Now run along to school."



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O *Mouser, Touser* and *Pussy* started for school as happy as could be for they were thinking of the Mouse pie. They had not gone far before they heard a terrible growl and as they looked to see what it was they saw a fierce looking dog behind the fence in *Jimmie Brown's* yard. He was a strange dog that they had never seen before and he looked so cross that they ran as fast as they could. But the fence was strong, so the dog could not get out to chase them. They had a terrible fright, and were glad when they reached a place of safety.



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IN school, *Mouser*, who still remembered the big dog that had frightened them so, and the nice Mouse pie that their mother had promised them, went to the blackboard at recess time and wrote in large letters *BAD DOGS, NICE MICE*. It made the other kittens laugh very much and they all agreed with him that, of all things, dogs are the worst, and mice the best. In fact they much preferred mice to ice-cream. What do you think of that? They learned lots of useful things in school such as catching mice, and chasing birds, but principally singing, so that when they grew up they could have concerts on the back fence.

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BAD DOGS
NICE MICE



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AFTER school was over they remembered what their mother had said about playing until supper time, so they thought they would go into *Jim-mie Brown's* garden where the ground was soft and where they could play hide-and-seek, and soldiers with Mr. Brown's big flag. They had quite forgotten about the bad dog by this time and were only thinking of play. The dog had been put there by *Jimmie* to frighten away little boys who came to take apples, but he thought it his duty to frighten away cats as well. Luckily he was asleep in his kennel and didn't hear the kittens.



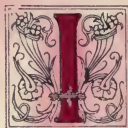
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MOUSER, being the oldest, took the lead and they were soon poking about in search of fun. Suddenly *Mouser* came to a closet near the house where *Mrs. Brown* kept her preserves. On the shelf stood a row of jams and jellies that made his mouth water to look at. He quickly got up on a chair and poked about the jars, one of which he upset. At length he found some currant jam and began eating it greedily. Oh! what a state he was in, with jam smeared all over his face and clothes! But he smiled sweetly and said, "That was very good," and he looked for more mischief.



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IN the garden he found a pot of red paint that *Jimmie Brown's* father had carelessly left standing by the fence. *Mouser* loved painting as much as he loved eating jam. He had at home a little box of paints that his big cousin *Tom* had given him for Christmas. *Mouser* thought the fence would look better if it were red, so he painted as hard as he could, quite unmindful that there were any such things as dogs in the world. While most of the paint went on the fence, quite a lot spattered on his clothes, but he didn't mind that.



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IN the meantime, *Pussy* found a watering can in the garden. There was water in it, so she thought she would sprinkle some on the yellow sun flowers and see if they would not grow as tall as Jack's bean stalk. She said she hoped they would grow up to the sky as she wanted to climb up and pick a star and see what made it shine so brightly and twinkle so merrily. Then she picked some catnip to take home to her mother, who was very fond of it and often made catnip sauce when they had pudding for dinner.



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TOUSER, who had found a big fat watermelon, thought it would be jolly to carry it home to his Mama; but, just as he was about to try and roll it away, he heard a noise that frightened him very much. *Bow-wow-wow* was what he heard and though it seemed far off at first, as he listened it seemed to be coming nearer rapidly. *Bow-wow-wow!* What a terrible sound for a little kitten to hear. The dog had awakened, and seeing the kittens at play, made a dash at them, barking with all his might and looking very savage. Dogs ought to know better than to frighten little kittens.



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MOUSER and *Pussy* had heard the dreadful noise also, so they all scampered together as fast as they could to reach the hole in the fence through which they had come in. They were very much frightened and *Touser* lost a boot and *Mouser* tore a big hole in his coat on a bramble bush, while two little mice, who were hidden in the grass clapped their hands, hoping that the big dog would catch the bad Kittens. The Kittens were in too great a hurry to run after the mice and only thought of getting away as quickly as possible from the dreadful dog who barked so fiercely.



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THEY finally reached the fence, and crawling through, ran for home as fast as they could. The big dog could not get under the fence to chase them. He got his head caught between the boards, which served him right for being so unkind. But, oh! how frightened the three kittens were and how they had spoiled their nice clothes. Their afternoon's pleasure was all gone. The watermelon and the catnip were left behind in their hurry, and *Pussy* got her head all scratched on a nail in the fence. They were very much worried too, as to what their Mama would say.



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MRS. TABBY CAT was very angry when her kittens came home and she saw their terrible condition. You never saw nice little kittens look so dirty. *Mouser's* coat was all daubed with red paint and jam, so she took off his clothes and sent him to bed without any supper for being so naughty. "*Mouser* was the oldest," she said, "and ought to show his brother and sister a good example." *Mouser* felt very sorry and said as he stood by his bed: "Oh! I do so want to be a good kitten and mind my Mama!" Then he crept into bed and was very sad indeed.



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It took Mama nearly an hour to clean the Kittens' clothes. Then they sat down to a supper of Mouse-pie which was really very fine. *Mouser* didn't get a bite, but he smelled the pie and sighed and said: "This is what comes of being naughty."

At last he fell asleep and dreamed that he was in a big garden where all the flowers and fruits were mice and there were no cruel dogs to bark and bite, and he was very happy.

Next day his Mother had forgiven him for she loved him in spite of his faults, and *Mouser* made up his mind never to get into trouble again.

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